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“HEALING UP” *VERSUS* “CURE.”

THE interesting and important letter in which Mr. GERARD SMITH criticises an article by Dr. COOPER in last month's issue, brings to the front a common misconception on the part of some homeopaths who have not been initiated into homeopathy through the portals of the *Organon*. Mr. GERARD SMITH expresses the opinion that operations are indeed too freely indulged in by surgeons for the removal of dead bone ; but he concludes his letter as follows :—

“ And, supposing that the patient makes a more rapid recovery by operation, I think that there is no ground for the complaint that less gratitude is expressed for the less rapid recovery under drug treatment. The man who gets his patient well in the shortest time deserves the most praise ; but if Dr. COOPER can prove that operation retards or prevents recovery, his opposition to it is amply established as just.”

Before proceeding to comment on this, we will make another quotation from our correspondent's letter :—

“ I am also not able to trace the homeopathicity of at least *Silica* and *Calcium*, or the *Fluorides* to bone caries ; though there is more evidence for their influence upon tubercular disease. I would suggest that it is the tubercle we should treat, and not merely the suppurative process.”

Taking the latter passage first, we would remark that Mr. GERARD SMITH is in error in thinking that it is either

“ the tubercle,” or the “ suppurative process ” that we should treat : it is neither of these, but the *patient*. A dozen patients may have tubercle or suppuration, and each may require a different remedy ; the condition of the diseased bone is only one out of many factors to be taken into consideration. Going back now to the first quotation, Mr. SMITH'S remark that the “ man who gets his patient well in the shortest time deserves the most praise,” would be quite just if he had not followed it by the further remark which shows that it is not so much the “ patient” as the diseased part of him, that he had in his mind.

But there is all the difference in the world between these two ideas. A true homeopathic cure of a patient leaves the patient for ever free from his disease ; the removal of carious bone by operation, and the consequent healing up of the part, may take only a few weeks, but the “ patient ” is not by any means cured : he is for ever liable to a renewed outbreak. We have seen patients kept under treatment for years with frequently recurring bone abscesses ; and by persistent homeopathic treatment the patient has been completely relieved of his tendency to the disorder, and has recovered with the perfect use of the limbs affected, and his constitution thoroughly renovated. This requires years of treatment, it is true ; but it ends in cure and not in mere “ healing up,” which is the thing allopaths aim at. We are not saying that, operation is never demanded : the circumstances in every case must decide : but the first thing to be considered is the *patient*, and not the diseased limb.

One reason why homeopathy makes no more progress in this country than it does, is the difficulty men have, in the present advanced state of the physical and, so to say, materialistic sciences, of apprehending HAHNEMANN'S point of view. We constantly talk about “ mind,” “ vitality,” “ the organism,” but we are at great pains to explain whenever we do so that we really do not mean anything by the terms. “ Mind” is the mere excretion of individual

brain cells ; “ vitality,” “ the organism,” are phrases to represent the sum total of the activities of all the cells of the body. Modern science has excluded the “ soul ” or the “ vital force ” from our confessed philosophic creed, although in our common speech it is perpetually cropping up. It was amusing to find in Dr. BURDER SANDERSON'S presidential address at the last meeting of the British Association the “ living soul ” re-asserting itself in that very centre of science under the name of “ specific energy ” which interfered with all calculations. “ HEIDENHAIN has proved,” said Dr. SANDERSON, “ that the process of lymphatic absorption, which before we regarded as dependent on purely mechanical causes, is in great measure due to the specific energy of cells, and that in various processes of secretion the principal part is not, as we were inclined not many years ago to believe, attributable to liquid diffusion, but to the same agency.” Commenting on this passage, *The Times* had some very caustic remarks, reflecting on the philosophical acumen of physiologists in that it was possible for them so recently to hold such narrow and inadequate views of living things.

HAHNEMANN'S clear vision saw in disease not merely an outward alteration of tissue and functions, but a disturbance of the living, “ spirit-like ” organism which animates the outward frame. This was to him the seat of all diseases (as distinguished from external injuries), and the remedies he employed were of the same “ spirit-like dynamic nature, capable of reaching the essence of the disorder. The cures wrought by HAHNEMANN'S method are not mere “ healings up,” but realise the ideal of JOHN HUNTER : “ What I call a cure is an alteration of the disposition and the effects of that disposition, and not the destruction of the cancerous parts.” So long as so many homeopaths are *blinded* by the visible effects of disease such as tumours and alterations of solid parts to the alterations of the organic disposition underlying them, proficiency in the homeopathic art must necessarily be rare.